

I'm a nothing. I'm ugly. I'm stupid. I'm worthless. I deserve to be crushed by you. You dislike me. That's because you're better than me. That's why things go wrong.

I have nothing to offer. I entered the picture a loser. I'm still losing. I wish I was never born. That was the first mistake. I emerged breech. My umbilical cord was wrapped around my neck, nearly choking me. I view it as an early suicide attempt. I came seconds away from dying but was placed on oxygen.

I still can't breathe. I still feel suffocated.

I turned to my mother when I was ten and cried, "You brought me into this world. You created me. It's all your fault." She had no response. Later, she died.

Nothing's changed for me.

I hyperventilate. A short-circuited, zipper-like pain shoots through me. I grab my heart and spring two inches in the air, my eyes rolling up in my head. I think I'm gonna die. Unfortunately, I live.

I can't do anything right. I get in my car. It's raining. I'm half-asleep but in a rush. CRASH! Head-on collision with a school bus. The windshield smashes into my face. Thousands of chips of glass burrow into me.

I bite my tongue. My right leg hits the gearshift. I suffer a concussion. Out cold. When I come to, I realize I'm still here. I mumble, "Oh no." They tell me I will heal. Why must I live?

I walk past a parking lot. A mobile home comes speeding out. It narrowly misses me by a second. If I had taken one more step, I'd be dead. I look at the driver's face. Even though he almost killed me, he does not see me. There's no way out.

I go to bed crying. I wake up crying. I'm so fucking lonely. I follow my routine. I brush my teeth, shower, stretch, and get dressed.

I faithfully report to my job. I do what I am told. The work is silently laid out for me on my desk. And I do it. Without it, I'm lost. I start to feel comfortable. There's some idle chatter throughout the day but no meaningful conversations. If they knew me, they wouldn't understand me. Things are kept on the surface. I go to lunch alone and follow my daily chores. Routinely doing the same thing every Monday. Routinely doing the same thing every Tuesday. Routinely doing the same thing every Wednesday. Routinely doing the same thing every Thursday.

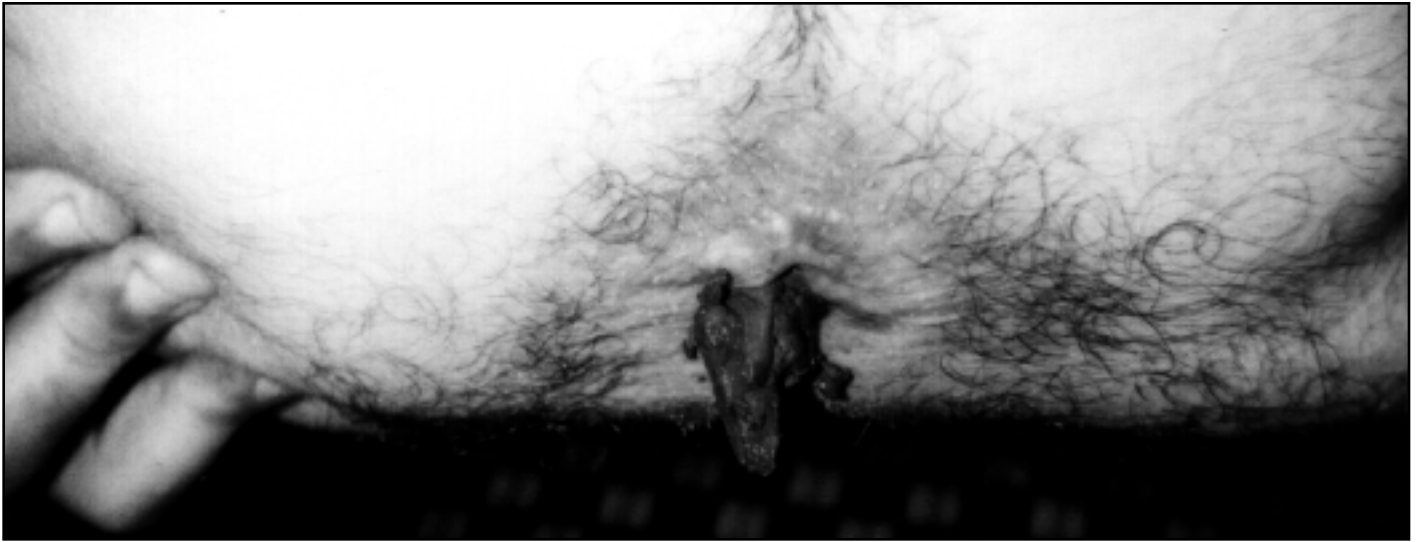
Routinely doing the same thing every Friday. I keep my opinions to myself. I don't want to stir up controversy. I don't ask questions. Keep it simple. It's safe that way. No one knows I'm here, and I'm safer that way. One day they realize I'm here. So they get rid of me. Permanently. They fire me.

I feel like a throw rug on a dirty floor. Everything seems hard. My routine works its way into a pattern. My routine drives me crazy. The only thing that's good is sleeping. Blocking everything out. Shut it down. Shut it off. Keep the pain away.

I wash my clothes. I clean my house. I read the papers. I get my food. That's all there is.

I look at the telephone, waiting for it to ring. Knowing the next call will save my life. No one calls. I listen to the clock ticking away in the silence of my misery. Each minute, I age. Blankness surrounds me. Constant dread. I hate the boredom. There is no compassion in this world. No, it's not all good. Tragedy happens. I feel incredible sadness. The ones who lie win. I told the truth and lost. I stop eating. Food has no taste anymore.

You told me I was stupid with your eyes. So you had to be right. You got up real close and screamed directly in my ear what a loser I am. What a fuck-up I am. How much I spoil everything. You must have been on to something. You must have the power to know the truth.



I look in the mirror and I see my ugly father's face staring back at me. I see my dead mother's face, too. It's voodoo how they're still attached. They told me I was shit, too.

I look again in the mirror. I get sick. My stupid, strawlike hair. Stupid bags under my reddened eyes. Crooked nose. Liver spots. Uneven eyebrows. Blemishes. Pimples. Whiteheads. Sores. A scar over my left eye from my car accident. Traces of a faint mustache around my upper lip. Hair sprouting out of my chin. Wrinkles starting to develop. I'm so ugly.

I'm so clumsy. I'm so awkward. I'm so unnecessary. My feeble daily attempts to create a life for myself. What's the point? Why do I do it? Why do I go on? Earthquake. The mirror cracks.

My hands shake. I hate myself. I rape myself. I can't take it anymore. I pull my dry, gray hair out of my head in clumps. I smack myself in the face. I clamp my teeth down on my lower lip until it bleeds. I claw at my head and pull out the dried-up flakes of dandruff. I scratch myself until I bleed. I pick old scabs from mosquito bites. I roll the crusts between my fingers, then chew it for a while. I bite my fingernails to the bone. I blow my nose like an elephant. I rub my eyes until they're purplish and swollen. I crack my knuckles. I cup my hands around my ass. I fart and then smell my fingertips. This is the reason I go on.

But then someone else reappears, and so does my self-doubt. It just doesn't feel right. The whole process starts all over again. They misunderstand me. They're not interested in me. They laugh at me. They hate me. I hate them.

I don't want them to get any closer. All is tense, forced, and unnatural. My feeble attempts at talking. I try to sound interesting. So useless. In one ear, out the other. They don't hear me. They won't remember. I look in their eyes. They look at my feet.

I'm invisible. So unclear. It's because I do NOT matter. Yesterday's news. The earth keeps spinning on its axis no matter what happens. It is immune to the tortures and injustices existing between its poles. It was here before I arrived. It will be here after I depart.

The sun's up there high in the sky. It's miles away, beyond my grasp. Yet every morning, there's a sunrise. Every night, a sunset. I'm down here, insignificant, bored, and boring. I wasn't meant for this planet. I don't want to be here. There is nothing to do. Nothing's fun. The days are long. I don't fit in. I'm not in demand.

They stare at me because I'm so unlike them. The outcast. The underdog. I'm a nonessential ant of a human being, needing

to be stomped out. I can easily be replaced. No one will know I'm gone.

I just want out of here. Get me the fuck out of here. I just want to die. I just want to die. I just want to die.

I want to die so badly, it hurts. I'm not afraid to die. I've lived long enough. I'm more afraid to live. I'm tired of the pain. When I'm dead, I'll be happy. When I'm dead, I'll like life better. When I'm dead, life will be more enjoyable. When I'm dead, life will be easier.

That's what keeps me going the most. Knowing that I am really going to die one day. Hallelujah! This stupid floor show is really gonna end. They'll finally flush me down the toilet where I belong. ■

